

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Words of encouragement
From: **Bev Harris**)

**"The will of God will never take you where the
Grace of God will not protect you."
Something good will happen to you today.**

Lesson: Acts 18; Acts 19; 1 Corinthians 1 - 4

Acts 18

The apostle Paul left Athens for Corinth , where he awaited the arrival of Timothy and Silas from Macedonia. Corinth was the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. It was a prosperous commercial center, famous for its cosmopolitan character, and known for its immorality. This immorality carried over into the church. Back in an earlier study, Paul befriended Aquila and Priscilla. They shared a common profession. They were tentmakers. Paul, in accordance with the practice of many of the Jewish scribes and rabbis, normally tried to provide his own material needs. While in today's society it many ministers look for the church to provide for all their needs. It would be a good thing for ministers to help provide for their own living. I do not see anything wrong with paying the man of God but many are preaching and teaching for the paycheck only. Paul worked, he preached the gospel, and yes, there were times when others gave to him. Paul was not caught up on the church providing for his every need. Timothy and Silas joined Paul. The gospel was preached. Many received the gospel, however, there were some who rejected it. We can only tell gospel. We can not make others accept it.

Once they have been told, the blood is on them. You have done what is required.

Apollos, another teacher of the word of God was an eloquent speaker who was instructed in the way of the Lord but he only knew of John's baptism. Priscilla and Aquila now followers of Christ were able to sit Apollos down and explain to him the way of God through Jesus Christ. Sometimes we need to help others understand the word of God clearly.

Acts 19

Paul traveled many cities. Paul corrected misunderstandings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many had accepted Jesus but had not received the Holy Spirit since they believed. It is nothing magical about the Holy Spirit. It is the power of God who gives us power to act in

the name of Jesus. As we get deeper in the book of Corinthians we will explore the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is so awesome about the things you can and can not do because the Holy Spirit lives in you. Through the power of God, Paul led many to Christ and healed along the way. Now again, Satan shows up. Satan does not like the progress of the Kingdom of God. Here in Ephesus God disciples are in constant struggle with the enemy. Many in Ephesus were worshipping idol gods -- statues of Diana. This was the work of the devil.

Satan is trying to defeat God. He is using us to do his work. God has given us power over the enemy and we must use this power.

1 Corinthians chapters 1 - 4

1 Cor 1

Paul addressed the church at Corinth about division. Many were saying they were of Paul or of Apollos, or of Peter or of Jesus.

Paul told them that God is not divided. We are only instruments used in the ministry of Jesus Christ. We should not boast in anything that we do. We need to preach that others will understand. Eloquent words that tickle the ears of man with not understanding can not save anyone.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

1 Cor 2

Wisdom comes for the Spirit of God. We have no knowledge of our own. God reveals it to us through His Spirit.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Human wisdom tells us seeing is believing. God's wisdom says believe what you can not see. There is no greater wisdom than the wisdom of God. God's wisdom is in His word. We must read and study the word of God to find the hidden treasures. They are revealed to us by His Spirit opening our eyes to the spiritual realm of God. We walk by faith(beliefs) and not by sight.

1 Cor 3

Paul said a divided church will not stand. We know if you divide anything, it is not as strong

as it would be if it was a whole piece. We need to stop destroying the temple of God and build on the solid foundation- Jesus Christ. It does not matter who plants the seed, or who waters it, Only God can give the increase. We all have a job to do. But we must be workers together. We will receive our reward according to our work.

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

1 Cor 4

We are all stewards. We must be found faithful in our endeavors for the Lord. We must stay with the gospel and not leaning to our own understanding. If you receive understanding of the word of God, help others to understand. We have nothing to boast about within ourselves.

The same Spirit who gave you understanding can give me understanding. We sometimes allow pride and boasting divide us in the church. To follow Christ we must suffer many things. We must also help each other along the way.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.

Paul was speaking to them as their father in the ministry. We as children of God need a spiritual father who will nurture and guide us. You may have been given the task of nurturing the children of God. Pray for guidance and understanding of the Word of God. Share is freely not boasting of yourself. It is Jesus we should boast about.

Dear Father,

Thank You for Your word, Your Son, Jesus our Lord and Savior, and Your Holy Spirit. Father fill us over and over with Your Spirit that we may understand all You have for us and all You have for us to do. I thank You for those who plant, those who water and most of all for You giving the increase. I Bless You Lord. Help us to live a life that overflow with thankfulness for Your goodness. Bless this ministry, the members and all who are touched by this ministry and the ministry of Your word everywhere.

In Jesus name I pray.

Friend of Jesus,

Gail